

BOOK REVIEW

THE EUROPEAN GARDEN FLORA. Volume 1. Edited by S.M. Walters *et al.* pp. 430 & xv. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1986.

This is the second volume of the *Flora* to be published. The first (Volume 2) which covers the remainder of the monocotyledons was published in 1984. The *Flora* attempts to provide a scientifically accurate and up-to-date means for the identification of plants cultivated for amenity in Europe and promises to be a worthy complement to *Flora Europaea*. Comparisons with *Flora Europaea* are inevitable as the two are similar in many ways. As well as having the same publisher it has an editorial committee of a dozen well known British botanists with seven equally well known advisers from seven countries of continental Europe. A bias towards plants grown in the British Isles might be expected as all but one of the 33 contributors to this volume are based there.

The *Flora* has been well planned. The aims of the work and its format are discussed in some detail in four introductory pages. Families and higher groups are arranged in the Engler and Prantl system as expressed in Melchior (edition 12). Other more modern systems are available but since the Engler and Prantl system has been so widely used, compatibility with other works is assured. All taxa are fully described except for some that are closely allied to described ones. A shorter diagnostic description is given for these. Keys to families, genera and species are provided. As well as the formal keys an 'informal' key is given for most large groups of species. These are in fact multiaccess keys and are useful in identifying infertile material. The contributor of each genus is acknowledged. The sequence of species within genera appears to be at the whim of the contributor. In *Juniperus* (contributor: H.J. Welch) the 19 species are arranged in the order they appear in the key. On the other hand the 18 species of *Yucca* (J. Cullen) key out in the following sequence: 18, 16, 12, 17, 8, 9, 10, 2, 15, 1, 4, 14, 2, 3, 6, 5. The species are not arranged alphabetically. Perhaps the editorial committee could look at this point in future volumes. Of particular value are the references to taxonomic books and articles cited for each genus and family. Some of the lists are quite long. For example, for *Galanthus* there are 11 references covering the period 1894 to 1982. Authors of all names of taxa at and below genus level are given. The problem of abbreviating authors' names has been recognised and neatly solved. Instead of following the *Draft index of author abbreviations compiled at... Kew* with all its quirks, as has been done in the *Flora of Australia*, the editors have given authors' surnames in full without initials. Exceptions are some common names such as Brown, Foster and Smith. I wonder why there are so many botanical Smiths and so few Joneses. The need to simplify author citation has also resulted in the omission of those awkward and useless *exs* and *ins*. Instead of, for example, (Lindley in Mitchell) F. Muell ex Benth. we get (Lindley) Bentham. The practice is in accordance with the International Code of Botanical Nomenclature and might be adopted with profit by editors and authors generally. Synonyms and misapplied names are given with the accepted name. Because of the difficulties of providing vernacular names in all the necessary languages they are not included. It could be argued that, since the text is in English, vernacular names in English could have been provided. Illustrations in the *Flora* are limited to clear line drawings emphasising characters useful in identification and to silhouettes of fern fronds. There are some good diagrammatic illustrations in the glossary. References to good published illustrations are also given. Many of these are to publications, such as Botanical Magazine and Botanical Register, not readily available in Australian libraries. For Australian genera such as *Eustrephus*, *Geitonoplesium* and *Anigozanthos*, however, references are made to modern Australian works. The book is remarkably free from errors, but among the Australian references I found C.A. Gardner's name spelt wrongly.

The design of the book bears comment. As in *Flora Europaea* the volumes are large with pages 275 mm × 220 mm. The typeface is neat and the text is easy to read, possibly because of the sparing use of italics and bold face. The introductory text is arranged in two columns, right hand justified. The effect is pleasing. The main body of the text, however, is arranged in three columns, not right-hand justified with ragged edges. The effect is not pleasing at all.

So much for the content and layout of the volume. Does it work? In south-eastern Queensland where one of the more aggressive weeds of gardens is *Nephrolepis exaltata* which is given a *Flora* hardiness rating G1 ('needs a cool glasshouse even in southern Europe'), finding plants to test keys and descriptions is difficult. Ferns are the exception. Many species are grown in glasshouse in Europe and out of doors here. They can be identified from the *Flora* without much difficulty. The illustrations are a great help. Delving into other families, Iridaceae, Agavaceae and Cupressaceae, proved equally rewarding. It is surprising that *Callitris* is not cultivated in European gardens. *C. monticola*, and, perhaps, *C. baileyi* and *C. oblonga* would make good tub plants in cool glasshouses in southern Europe.

The European Garden Flora is a well presented, easy to use, scholarly work highly recommended to serious horticulturalists particularly in temperate regions. Two volumes have been published and another three or four will probably be needed to treat the dicotyledons. The work may therefore prove rather too expensive for most people. What is urgently needed is a work similar to L.H. Bailey's *Manual of Cultivated Plants*, still a most useful volume though last revised more than 35 years ago.

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CORRIGENDUM

Austrobaileya 2(3) (1986)

p203. latin diagnosis. The third line should read '.....in vel sub inflorescentia dispositis deficientibus et fructu

p205. Line 23 should be altered to read '..... petals twice the number of calyx lobes, glabrous, white, inserted in a single whorl at the mouth of the floral tube, narrowly clavate

Line 31 should read '.....sculptured, 60–65 µm diameter;

Line 48 should read '..... Clarkson 4584 (A,BRI,CANB,DNA,F,K,L,MEL

p249, p251. The line drawings on these pages have been reversed. The caption on p249 refers to the line drawing on p251 while the caption on p251 refers to the line drawing on p249.

p276. Line 11 should read '..... Clarkson 4989 (BRI,CANB,DNA,L, MO,PERTH, QRS,SAN);

The second part of Couplet 4 should read 'Ovules 6 or more